

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A device for shuffling cards comprising: a pre-shuffler; and a main shuffler, the pre-shuffler comprising: a plurality of compartments for holding groups of playing cards to be shuffled; and an output portion of the pre-shuffler, the output portion delivering one group of cards at a time to an input portion of the main shuffler, the pre-shuffler delivering groups of cards to an input portion of the main shuffler in a different order than an order inputted into the pre-shuffler, each group of cards being input separately as an entire group, so the main shuffler ~~[[for rearranging]]~~ rearranges the order of cards input into the main shuffler and ~~[[for]]~~ outputting cards in a substantially random order.
2. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the pre-shuffler comprises an input card holder segmented into the compartments, the card holder supporting the cards on their edges.
3. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the pre-shuffler comprises an input card holder segmented into the compartments, the card holder being moveable with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler for delivering one group of cards at a time to the input portion of the main shuffler.
4. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 3 wherein the input card holder is moved substantially horizontally by a motor drive to position a group of cards with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler.
5. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the pre-shuffler comprises an input card holder segmented into the compartments, wherein a group of cards in the pre-shuffler is positioned with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler for allowing the group of cards to be deposited into the input portion of the main shuffler.
6. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 5 further comprising a platform supporting the input card holder, the platform having an opening, the holder being movable relative to the platform to allow a group of cards to be moved over the opening so as to fall through the opening and be delivered to the input portion of the main shuffler.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 6 wherein the input card holder comprises a rack having teeth, the pre-shuffler further comprising a pinion that engages the rack and is rotated to move the card holder relative to the input portion of the main shuffler.
8. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the compartments comprise five or more compartments.
9. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the compartments comprise between five and nine compartments.
10. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein each compartment holds at least 52 cards.
11. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the input portion of the main shuffler comprises an input tray of the main shuffler.
12. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the input portion of the main shuffler comprises an input tray, the main shuffler further comprising rotating rollers for forwarding one card at a time from a top of a group of cards in the input tray to a randomizer.
13. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 1 wherein the input portion of the main shuffler comprises an input tray, the main shuffler further comprising rotating rollers for forwarding one card at a time from a top of a group of cards in the input tray to selected card receptacles in a randomizer.
14. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 13 wherein the main shuffler comprises a plurality of card receptacles, the plurality of card receptacles being moveable relative to the input portion of the main shuffler and an output portion of the main shuffler, the main shuffler comprising a controllable drive for aligning card receptacles in a certain sequence with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler for receiving cards from the input portion, the drive randomly controlling the positioning of the card receptacles with respect to the output portion of the main shuffler, the output portion of the main shuffler receiving one or more cards from a card

receptacle aligned with the output portion.

15. (ORIGINAL) The device of claim 14 wherein the output portion of the main shuffler receives all cards from a card receptacle before the card receptacles are moved to align another card receptacle with the output portion of the main shuffler.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A device for shuffling cards comprising:

a pre-shuffler and a main shuffler,

the pre-shuffler comprising:

a plurality of compartments for holding groups of playing cards to be shuffled;

an output portion of the pre-shuffler, the output portion delivering one group of multiple playing cards at a single time, without shuffling cards in the one group, to an input portion of the main shuffler,

the main shuffler being capable of rearranging the order of the groups of multiple cards input into the main shuffler and for outputting cards in a substantially random order.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 25 wherein the pre-shuffler comprises an input card holder segmented into the compartments, the card holder supporting the cards on their edges.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 25 wherein the pre-shuffler comprises an input card holder segmented into the compartments, the card holder being moveable with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler for delivering one group of cards at a time to the input portion of the main shuffler.

28. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 27 wherein the input card holder is moved substantially horizontally by a motor drive to position a group of cards with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler.

29. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 25 wherein the pre-shuffler comprises an input card holder segmented into the compartments, wherein a group of cards in the pre-shuffler is positioned with respect to the input portion of the main shuffler for allowing the group of cards to be deposited into the input portion of the main shuffler.

30. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 29 further comprising a platform supporting the input card holder, the platform having an opening, the holder being movable relative to the platform to allow a group of cards to be moved over the opening so as to fall through the opening and be delivered to the input portion of the main shuffler.

31. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 30 wherein the input card holder comprises a rack having teeth, the pre-shuffler further comprising a pinion that engages the rack and is rotated to move the card holder relative to the input portion of the main shuffler.

32. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 25 wherein the compartments comprise

five or more compartments.

33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 25 wherein each group is randomly selected for delivery to the input portion of the main shuffler.

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 25 wherein groups of cards are delivered to the input portion of the shuffler sequentially.

35. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A device for shuffling cards comprising:

a platform of compartments; and

a main shuffler,

the platform of compartments comprising: a plurality of compartments for holding groups of playing cards in each compartment of the platform to be shuffled; and an output portion of the platform of compartments, the output portion delivering one group of cards at a time to an input portion of the main shuffler, the main shuffler for rearranging the order of cards input into the main shuffler from the platform of compartments and for outputting cards in a substantially random order, and the output portion selecting single groups of cards within a single compartment to be randomly delivered to the input portion of the main shuffler.

36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 35 wherein the platform moves relative to the main shuffler.

37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 35 wherein the platform moves the compartments relative to the input portion of the main shuffler.

38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The device of claim 37 wherein the platform aligns compartments in the platform of compartments randomly with the input portion of the main shuffler.

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SUMMARY OF THE OFFICE ACTION

The Office Action confirms the restriction of the claims as between claims 1-15 and 16-24.

Claims 1, 3, 5-6, 11, 15, 25-27, 29-30, 33 and 34 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Fineman, US Patent No. 5,944,230.

Claims 2, 4, 7-10, 12-14, 28 and 31-32 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Fineman, US Patent No. 5,944,230, when further considered with Johnson (US Patent No. 6,676,127).